

Main trends in the formation of regional economic unions in the geoeconomic space of Eurasia

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Abstract. The article makes an attempt to analyze the main trends in the development of integration processes in the Eurasian geo-economic space for the period from 1950 to 2020. The author also touches upon such important issues as the principles of the formation and functioning of integration unions on the Eurasian continent. Various types of integration blocks are distinguished, and the reasons for the beginning of transformation processes in the geo-economic space of Eurasia are identified, with an emphasis on the features of regional integration unions and the priorities of participation of the Eastern Partnership countries in them. The article concludes that there are three main integration trends in the Eurasian geo-economic space, which are formed in the following mega-regional economic unions: the EU, EAEU and BSEC, as well as the local economic union GUAM. EU continues to strengthen its geostrategic positions on the continent, Russia, through the establishment of the EAEU, has formed its main integration trend, and the BSEC has the potential for further development in the coming years. GUAM, as a local economic union, is functioning at the junction of the above-mentioned mainstream integration unions.

Keywords: mainstream integration trends, geo-economic space of Eurasia, European Union, Eurasian Economic Union, Eastern partnership, regional unions, transformational trends.

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Avrasiya geoiqtisadi məkanında regional iqtisadi birliklərin formalaşmasında əsas tendensiyalar

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Annotasiya. Məqalədə 1950-2020-ci illər aralığında Avrasiya geoiqtisadi məkanında integrasiya proseslərinin inkişafındakı əsas tendensiyalarının təhlilinə cəhd edilir. Müəllif Avrasiya qitəsində integrasiya birliklərinin formalaşması və fəaliyyət prinsipləri kimi vacib məsələlərə də toxunur. Avrasiya geoiqtisadi məkanında transformasiya proseslərinin başlanma səbəblərinin müəyyən edilməsi məqsədilə regional integrasiya birliklərinin özünəməxsus xüsusiyyətlərinə və Şərq Tərəfdaşlığına üzv olan ölkələrin sözügedən birliklərdə iştirak prioritetlərinə nəzər salınmış, bundan əlavə müxtəlif integrasiya bloklarının müəyyənləşdirilməsinə də yer verilmişdir. Məqalədə Avrasiya geoiqtisadi məkanında mövcud olan üç magistral integrasiya tendensiyasının növbəti regional integrasiya birliklərinin (Avropa İttifaqı, Avrasiya İqtisadi İttifaqı və Qara Dəniz İqtisadi Əməkdaşlıq Təşkilatı, həmçinin GUAM lokal iqtisadi təşkilatı) yaranmasında öz əksini tapması kimi nəticəyə gəlinir. Alınan nəticələrə əsasən, Aİ qitədə öz geostrateji mövqelərini möhkəmləndirməyə davam edir, Rusiya Aİİ-ni təsis etməsi ilə yeni aparıcı integrasiya tendensiyasını formalaşdırmışdır, QDİƏT isə yaxın gələcəkdə daha böyük inkişaf potensialına sahibdir. GUAM isə lokal iqtisadi təşkilat qismində daha əvvəl qeyd olunan aparıcı integrasiya birliklərinin kəşiməsində fəaliyyət göstərir.

Açar sözlər: magistral integrasiya birlikləri, Avrasiya geoiqtisadi məkanı, Avropa Birliyi, Avrasiya İqtisadi İttifaqı, Şərq Tərəfdaşlığı, regional ittifaqlar, transformasiya tendensiyalar.

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Introduction

At the turn of the 21st century, with the collapse of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, (CMEA) and the USSR, integration processes in the Eurasian continent have undergone radical structural transformations. Three main integration trends in the geo-economic space of Eurasia can be emphasized:

- Enlargement and strengthening of the European Union (EU);
- The collapse of the socialist integration unions - CMEA and the USSR;

- Formation of new regional economic unions.

Under the current conditions, the following main research tasks are brought to the fore, requiring comprehensive scientific research:

- Analyze the main trends in the formation and development of integration unions on the Eurasian continent;
- Identify the reasons for the beginning of transformation processes in the geoeconomic space of Eurasia ;
- To implement comparative analysis of macro indicators of Eurasian regional economic unions;
- Reveal the features of regional economic unions in Europe;
- Analyze the EU's integration policy towards the post-Soviet (Eastern European) republics (Eastern Partnership Program (EaP)).

At the present stage, no country in the world is capable of effective independent existence and development, i.e. it should be involved in global or regional economic integration trends. Post-Soviet (Eastern European) republics are also involved in these integration unions: a) Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia joined the EU, b) Belarus and Armenia joined the newly created Eurasian Economic Union - the EAEU, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan created their own regional union - GUAM. However, it should be noted that: a) five republics (Armenia-EAEU, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan-GUAM) were already founders of the newly created Black Sea Economic Union-BSEC; b) and three GUAM member republics (Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) are in the process of joining the EU (associate members). From the above, it is clear that the six post-Soviet republics (Eastern European) are in search of a “mother” integration union. In turn, each of the above mentioned regional economic unions (EU, EAEU, BSEC) develops a policy of involving these countries in their union. In this regard, the problem of reconciling the interests of a single post-Soviet republic with the integral interests of these regional unions arises. The main objective of the article is to identify the main consistent patterns of the formation of new regional integration unions in the context of the dynamic development of the Western European integration trend.

Main part

Analysis of contemporary research and publications

The importance of the problems associated with the study of the processes of integration, regionalization and globalization, is confirmed in the publications of many Western scholars, among whom it is necessary to mention K. Adamo, B. Balassa, A. Beya, P. Bijsmans, F. Beechey, D. Weber R. Gillespie, Z. Gstöhl, P. Jaronna, J. Zakman, P. Krugman, D. Lane, S. Menard, G. Myrdal, J. Nye, J. Stiglitz, P. Taylor and others. The works of E. Ademmer, G. Kolodko, A. Marchetti, G. Pascariu, A. Sapir, M. Erke and others are devoted to the integration policy of the EU with the Eastern European post-Soviet republics. Their works have made a significant contribution to the modern popularization of this topic. Among the scientists of the post-Soviet countries, the specified problems as an object of research were successfully developed by Ch. Abbasov, I. Almashev, M. Akhmedov, A. Baykov, A. Bayramov, O. Belorus, Y. Borko, D. Veliev, E. Hajizade, A. Galchinsky, M. Zgurovsky, M. Ivanov, V. Inozemtsev, E. Ismaylov, E. Lukasheva, A. Maharramov, N. Milchekova, S. Mironovich, Yu. Pakhomov, V. Rokoch, V. Rotaru, A. Spartak, A. Strelkov, A. Filipenko, V. Shemyatenkov, Yu. Shishkov, Y. Yaskevich and others. This fact clarifies interest and understanding of the exceptional importance of this topic in the scientific and economic space. At the same time, it should be underlined that, despite the growing interest in the study of the above mentioned problems, the issues of the formation of main integration trends and regional economic unions and their role in the formation of the geo-economic space are still being investigated insufficiently. In this regard, we consider it legitimate to focus on the named direction of the research.

Methodology

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research is general scientific research methods, qualitative and quantitative analysis, methods of systemic and comparative analysis. The information base of the study is made up of statistical data obtained from the database of international financial organizations, official websites of regional unions, publications and scientific works of scientists devoted to the formation of main integration trends, transformation of the geo-economic space of Europe, as well as the EU's integration policy towards post-Soviet (Eastern European) countries.

Results and Discussion

Formation of mainstream integration trends in the geoeconomic space of Eurasia (1950-1990).

After World War II, the concept of integration of countries on the European continent underwent a radical transformation. Instead of the ethno-confessional principle in the unification of states into unions, ideological and economic principles became the basic ones, which, in turn, significantly contributed to the formation of two main trends that led to the emergence of opposing alliances of capitalist and socialist countries. The integration of countries in the capitalist camp, which took place mostly on economic principles, determined two main directions: a military-political alliance - NATO (1949) and an economic union - the European Coal and Steel Community (1950), which included Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany and France. In 1957, this association was transformed into the European Economic Community (EEC) and became the driving force behind Western European integration, the initiating core of which were the FRG and France. In 1973 Great Britain, Denmark and Ireland joined the EEC, in 1981 - Greece, and in 1986 - Spain and Portugal [Shemjatenkov, 2003, p.48]. In 1992, these 12 countries signed the Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union (EU), which gave rise to a new, higher level of integration [Barth and Bijsmans, 2018, pp. 216-217].

In the socialist camp, on the contrary, the integration processes took place predominantly on ideological principles. So, in 1949, an economic union of socialist countries of Eastern Europe was created - (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)), and in 1955 a military-political union - the Warsaw Pact (WP)-was created. The initiating core in the formation of both unions was the USSR [Ismailov and Papava, 2010,p.16]. Unlike the permanently expanding capitalist camp, integration here in Eastern Europe proceeded with complications, namely, some countries attempted to leave the socialist camp: Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). In 1968, due to the intervention of the WP troops to Czechoslovakia, Albania unilaterally left this organization. In 1990, the GDR withdrew from the CMEA and WP and became part of the FRG, and therefore joined NATO. The growth of disintegration processes in the socialist camp in 1991 led to the dissolution of both the WP and CMEA. Similar processes were observed in member states themselves. So, in 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was split into fifteen independent states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) - into six republics (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina), and in 1992 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR) - into two republics (Czech and Slovak). Out of these three socialist union countries, only the CSFR managed to carry out the "velvet divorce", whereas several ethno-confessional conflicts took place between the member republics in the USSR and the SFRY and many of these conflicts remain active today. Thus, a radical transformation of the geopolitical and geoeconomic space of the European continent happened and a new stage of integration processes began. In other words, Eastern European integration unions (WP and CMEA), formed mainly on ideological principles collapsed, and new

associations began to form on the basis of economic principles [Bajkov,2014].

At the turn of the twenty-first century the process of transformation of the political and economic systems of the post-CMEA and post-Soviet republics started [Kolodko,2010, p.70]. At the same time, the EU began developing new socio-economic principles and approaches with the purpose of involvement of these countries in the European Union. The enlargement of the EU, which took place in the form of integration of the post-socialist countries, was multi-stage and still continues. In 2004, the post-Soviet (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) and post-CMEA countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) were the first to join the EU; – followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, and – Croatia in 2013. At the same time, while remaining in the military-political alliance of NATO, Great Britain left the EU in 2020. Thus, the EU was able to successfully integrate the 8-post-CMEA and 3-post-Soviet countries, thereby strengthening the mainstream trend of Western European integration [Saburov and others, 2019].

Transformation of Eurasian geoeconomic space (1991-2020).

At the same time, the Russian Federation (RF), which was the initiating core of the USSR and, accordingly, the unions of the Eastern European countries (CMEA and WP), began to implement a new integration policy in the post-Soviet space based on economic principles. So, right after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the Russian Federation formed a new integration union of the post-Soviet republics (without the participation of the Baltic countries and Turkmenistan) - the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In view of the fact that the CIS was not a supranational entity and was not capable of pursuing a real integration policy between the member countries of this community, the Russian Federation initiated the creation of new integration blocks in the Eurasian geopolitical and geoeconomic space. In 1992, Russia entered into a Collective Security Treaty with the republics of Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and in 2002 a military-political union, the CSTO, was established. The same post-Soviet countries in 2000 signed an agreement on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), which in 2015 was transformed into the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) [Ismailov and Papava, 2010, pp. 15-20]; [Ismailov and Papava, 2006, pp. 48-56].

Along with this, new sub-regional economic unions emerged in the post-Soviet and post-CMEA space. So, in 1997 the former republics of the USSR (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan) created a new sub-regional integration economic union - GUAM. Since the collapse of the USSR, ethno-territorial conflicts associated with the Russian Federation have existed in all member countries of this union. In Ukraine it is Donbass and Crimea, in Moldova - Transnistria, in Georgia - Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in Azerbaijan - Nagorno-Karabakh. All this significantly complicated the development of integration processes, both among the GUAM member states and with the states of the Eurasian continent [Muzaffarli, 2008, p. 15].

Analysis given in table.1 of the main macroeconomic indicators show a positive trend in EU economic growth. Thus, over 30 years, the territory of the EU has almost doubled, the population has increased – by one and a half times, and the GDP - more than 3 times. However, it should be noted that these data are presented by excluding both candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, North Macedonia, Turkey and Montenegro) and associated members (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) of EU. In other words, with the accession of the above-mentioned countries, the EU can still significantly expand. According to statistical indicators for 1990, CMEA surpassed the EU in terms of territory and population, second only in terms of GDP. After the collapse of the CMEA and the USSR itself, in the post-CMEA space new regional economic unions - EAEU, BSEC and GUAM were founded. While significant growth in all macroeconomic indicators was observed in the EU during this period, the conditional successor of CMEA- EAEU has experienced a reduction in territory of 13% and 55% population decline (as can be seen from the data in table.1), wherein PPP of EAEU increased

more than twice (202%) and in 2019 it was estimated in 4 825 billion.USD. It is noteworthy that the increase in GDP production in the EAEU over this period is largely due to the natural growth of the economy. The aggregate macroeconomic indicators of the EAEU and GUAM in terms of territory, population and GDP are 21,054 thousand km², 242 million people, 5,262 billion US dollars. Share of GUAM is estimated in 794 thousand km² (3.8%), 60.7 million people (25.1%), and 807.407 billion US dollars (15.3%), respectively. As far as GUAM is concerned, this organization, for objective reasons, is not the main integration union in the geopolitical space of Eurasia. At the same time, it is located at the junction of the EU and the EAEU, which makes it equally attractive for both main integration unions.

Table 1. The main indicators of regional unions in the geoeconomic space of Eurasia (for the period from 1990 to 2019)

Regional economic unions <	
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Source: World Bank (2021).

Integration of the GUAM member states into the EU will enhance chances of the latter to approach the borders of Russia and increase its influence in the post-Soviet space.

Thus, it can be stated that after the collapse of the WP, CMEA and the USSR, in the integration processes of the geopolitical and geo-economic space of Eurasia took place a transformation, and new military-political and economic alliances began to emerge on the basis of new principles [Ismailov and Papava, 2006, p. 39]. This was clarified in the following trends:

- expansion and deepening of the main trend of integration between Western European countries (NATO and the EU) predominantly on the basis of socio-economic principle and at the expense of the joining of new states (post-CMEA and three Baltic post-Soviet states);
- approval of the economic principle (instead of the ideological one) as the main principle of the integration of the Eastern European countries;
- The formation of new integration unions at the initiative of the Russian Federation on the basis of economic principles in the geopolitical space of Eurasian continent- the CSTO and

¹ Only the European CMEA member countries

² Excluding EU candidate states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Turkey and Montenegro) and associate members Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine

³ Excluding Eurasian countries: Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

EAEU [Zvjagel'skaya, 2019];

- The emergence of a new integration union BSEC and subregional economic union-GUAM in the eastern part of the Eurasian continent [Hajizada and Marciacq, 2013, p. 306].

European Neighborhood Policy with post-Soviet (Eastern European) Republics – Eastern Partnership program

In order to promote integration ties with six post-Soviet countries - Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine - in 2009 the EU established a joint initiative "Eastern Partnership" (EaP). Eastern Partnership program of EU is being implemented within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Out of the EaP countries, three states - Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine - are located in Eastern Europe. That is, the EU has land borders with these countries and is extremely interested in their integration in order to further expand and strengthen security on the continent. Of the South Caucasus countries, the EU does not border on any of them by land, but through the Black Sea it has maritime borders with Georgia. Despite these differences, the EU considers all countries in the region under the EaP program.

Table 2. Main indicators of EU And EaP states for 2019

EU and EaP states		EU	EaP	Total
Indicators				
Territory	Thou. sq. km	4 476	1 031	5 507
	%	81,3	18,7	100
Population	Million people	513,5	73,2	586,7
	%	87,5	12,5	100
GDP(PPP)	Billions.\$	20 838	1 038	21 876
	%	95,2	4,8	100

Source: World Bank (2021).

As you can see from the table.2, the territory of the Eastern Partnership countries is 1,031 thousand km², population - 73.2 million people, GDP (PPP) - 1,038 billion US dollars. In case of integration of these countries, the EU would improve its geostrategic positions. So, due to the possible accession of the EaP countries to its structures, the EU can expand its territory by 23%, increase its population by 14%, and GDP by 5%. In view of the fact that Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova have clearly defined their pro-Western vector of foreign policy, they have more chances to integrate into the EU structures earlier than other EaP countries.

Table 3. Main Indicators of EAEU and GUAM for 2019

EAEU and GUAM		EAEU	GUAM	Total
Indicators				
Territory	Thou. sq. km	20 260	794,0	21 054
	%	97,0	3,0	100
Population	Million people	181,8	60,7	242,0
	%	75,0	25,0	100
GDP(PPP)	Billions.\$	4 825	807,437	5 632
	%	85,7	14,3	100

Source: World Bank (2021).

Table 3 shows the macroeconomic indicators of the EAEU and GUAM, since Belarus and Armenia from the EaP countries are already members of the EAEU. The integration of GUAM members (three associated members of the EU and Azerbaijan) into the EAEU can lead to an increase in the population of the latter by 33%, GDP - by 16%, and territory - by 3%. In view of the fact that the Russian Federation, as the initiating core of the EAEU, is fully interested in strengthening Eurasian integration in the post-Soviet space, the involvement of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine naturally becomes a priority task for this regional union.

Table 4a. Participation Of The Eastern Partnership Countries In The Regional Unions Of The Geo-economic Space Of Eurasia

Regional economic unions		EU	EAEU	BSEC	GUAM	ECO
EaP states						
1. Eastern European states						
1.1. Belarus		–	+	–	–	–
1.2. Moldova		±	–	+	+	–
1.3. Ukraine		±	–	+	+	–
2. South Caucasian states						
2.1. Azerbaijan		–	–	+	+	+
2.2. Armenia		–	+	+	–	–
2.3. Georgia		±	–	+	+	–

Source: ECO (2021); ENP (2021); GUAM (2021); EEU (2021); BSEC (2021).

Table 4b

Regional economic union EaP states	EU	EAEU	BSEC	GUAM	ECO
1.EAEU members					
1.1.Belarus	–	+	–	–	–
1.2.Armenia	–	+	+	–	–
2.GUAM members					
2.1.Azerbaijan	–		+	+	+
2.2.Georgia	±		+	+	–
2.3. Moldova	±		+	+	–
2.4. Ukraine	±		+	+	–

Source: ECO (2021); ENP (2021); GUAM (2021); EEU (2021); BSEC (2021).

Table 4a and 4b show how individual EaP countries are integrated into various regional unions in the geo-economic space of Eurasia at varying extent. Out of the four GUAM member states, three countries (Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) are oriented mainly towards integration with NATO and the EU, which is confirmed by their status of associate members of the EU since 2016, as well as the provision of advanced partner status to Ukraine and Georgia by NATO in 2018. In connection with the achieved successes, Eastern European Ukraine continues to advance the pro-Western line of its foreign policy and the possible military threat from Russia only strengthens the adamant position of official Kiev. Among the countries of the Eastern Partnership, Ukraine is ahead of the rest of the members of this program if we look at its macro indicators and consistency in cooperation with the EU, which determines the increased interest of the EU in the early integration of Ukraine.

Although Moldova, another Eastern European country of the Eastern Partnership program, did not receive the status of a partner of enhanced capabilities from NATO, for a long time it was considered one of the leader countries of this program due to the fact that in the first years from the beginning of the establishment of the Eastern Partnership it demonstrated a rather high level of approximation to EU standards and the implementation of a number of domestic reforms. However, the factor of the Transnistrian conflict with Russia to a certain extent slows down the intensity of pro-Western reforms, thereby complicating the development of bilateral integration ties between the EU and Moldova [Rouet and Pascariu, 2019];[Rotaru,2018].

Among the republics of the South Caucasus, Georgia stands out for the most fixed and purposeful course towards rapprochement with Europe. For a long time, Georgia's accession to the European Union has been viewed by the country's leadership as the main task of its foreign policy. The lack of progress in resolving conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the categorical disagreement of the self-proclaimed republics to abandon independence and accept the proposals proposed by Georgia on "the widest possible autonomy" are linked by the country's leadership to Russia's policy in the South Caucasus and its support for separatism in the region. By peaceful settlement of "third forces" represented by the European Union, the United States, the OSCE, the UN, Georgia seeks to internationalize conflicts, to reduce the role of Russia in their resolution. Similar motives are also observed in Ukraine and Moldova.

Unlike the pro-European countries participating in GUAM, Azerbaijan has been demonstrating a more balanced foreign policy in the international arena since gaining independence. While other GUAM members like Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia signed Association Agreements, Azerbaijan gave up this opportunity in 2014. There were several reasons for this decision. For many years, under the surface of the expanding cooperation between the European Union and Azerbaijan, there have been various controversial issues that are still subject to ongoing resolution under the Association Agreement. Moreover, Russia's gross interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine after the signing of the last Association Agreement with the EU was also a decisive factor for Baku's decision - it was perceived as a warning signal to Azerbaijan. From Baku's perspective, the threat of Russian interference posed a greater risk than the potential benefit from an understanding agreement with the EU [Bolgova, 2019, p. 120-122].

Another specific feature of GUAM is that its participants are not full members of the EU and at the same time are not part of the EAEU: they cooperate with each other within the framework of GUAM. In the EaP program between these states, there is also internal integration within the framework of the union itself. Armenia and Belarus are focused on integration within the framework of the Eurasian integration trend, joining the EAEU economic union. Moreover, Belarus is a "Union State" with the Russian Federation, i.e. unlike Armenia, it is in a closer "link" with the Russian Federation. It is also worth noting that in 2020 Belarus made a decision to reduce its participation in Eastern Partnership to the expert level, citing as an argument the EU's politicized approach to the events taking place after the presidential elections in Belarus, including the imposition of sanctions by EU.

Armenia, while adhering to complementarism in foreign policy for a long time, after the end of the Second Karabakh War, plans to strengthen further integration with Russia within the EAEU, since it is strongly dependent on Russia in terms of economy [Yılmaz and Yorulmaz, 2021, p.165]. In the context of the formation of a new geopolitical situation in the region following the results of the Second Karabakh War and taking into account establishment of new transport corridors between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the future, which may contribute to the growth of integration between the three republics, the active involvement of the European Union in this process in order to prevent the potential increase in Russia's influence and Turkey in the region seems more appropriate. As already noted, the BSEC Economic Union includes not only all EaP countries, with the exception of Belarus, but also the EAEU member Russian Federation, EU members - Bulgaria, Greece and Romania, EU candidate countries - Albania, Serbia and Turkey, as well as associate members - Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The mixed composition of BSEC distinguishes it from other integration unions. One of the main directions of the BSEC policy is the maintenance of mutually beneficial relations with the EU in such areas as energy, science and technology, transport, agriculture, etc.[Lyubcheva, 2010,p.9-11]. It should also be noted that important economic projects in the Black Sea region can serve as an incentive for the formation of multilateral cooperation between the EU, EAEU and BSEC.

Table 5. Main indicators of the EaP countries and regional unions in the geo-economic space of Eurasia for 2019

Regional economic unions Indicators		2019					
		EaP	EU	EAEU	BSEC	GUAM	ECO
Territory	Thou. sq. km	1 031	4 476	20 260	19 318	794,0	7 853
	%	100	434	1 965	1 873	77	761
Population	Million people	73,2	513,5	181,8	341,0	60,7	504,7
	%	100	701	248	465	17	689
GDP(PPP)	Billions.\$	1 038	20 838	4 825	8 383	807,4	5 526
	%	100	2 007	465	807	78	532

Source: World Bank (2021).

Comparative analysis of the main macro-indicators characterizing the socio-economic potential of the EaP program countries, on the one hand, and the existing regional integration unions (EU, EAEU, BSEC, ECO and GUAM), on the other hand, demonstrates their incomparability in terms of territorial, human and production resources (table.5). Thereby, compared to the EU the EaP is 4.3 times less in terms of territory, 7 times less in terms of population and 20 times less in terms of GDP production; and in comparison to another main integration union in the geo-economic space of Eurasia - the EAEU - is respectively 19.6 , 2.4 and 4.6 times less. Comparison of the macroeconomic indicators of the BSEC and the EaP shows that the BSEC is 18.7 times larger than the EaP in terms of the territory, 4.6 times larger in terms of population and 8 times larger in terms of GDP. Of the regional associations presented above, only GUAM is inferior to the EaP countries and other integration blocs in respect of territory, population and GDP. Thus, GUAM constitutes 77% of the EaP territory, 83% of EaP population and 78% of EaP GDP . Formed in 1985, ECO is a regional union that includes the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia. ECO founding countries are Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. In terms of macroeconomic indicators for 2019, this union is more than 7 times larger than the EaP in territory, 6.8 times in terms of population, and about 5 times in terms of GDP production. Despite the fact that the initiating core of this union were Turkey and Iran, which are regional powers in both the Middle East and the South Caucasus, the ECO, in contrast to the EU and the EAEU, is not considered the main integration association in Eurasia. The ECO activity has intensified as a result of the accession to it in 1992 of the Asian post-Soviet countries. Therefore, in terms of macroeconomic indicators, the EaP is in no way comparable with the above-mentioned integration associations existing in the world.

Conclusion

To sum up, it can be stated, that after a radical transformation of integration processes in the geo-economic space of Eurasia, the EU as a main integration union has observable strengthened and continues to strengthen its geostrategic positions, implementing a policy of enlargement to the East through the creation of the EaP program. Russia, in turn, by establishing a regional economic union - EAEU, has formed its main integration trend on the Eurasian continent as opposed to the EU and is trying to impede the process of integration of all EaP member countries into the EU structures. BSEC has the potential to become one of the leading integration unions in the Eurasian space in the coming years. GUAM, as a sub-regional union, cannot be

considered as the main integration union, but at the same time it has strategic importance for both the EU and the EAEU, which are making active efforts to involve the GUAM member states in their alliances.

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Основные тенденции формирования региональных экономических союзов на геоэкономическом пространстве Евразии

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Резюме. В статье сделана попытка анализа основных тенденций развития интеграционных процессов на евразийском геоэкономическом пространстве за период 1950-2020 гг. Автор затрагивает и такие важные вопросы как принципы формирования и функционирования интеграционных союзов на евразийском материке. Выделяются различные типы интеграционных блоков, а также определяются причины начала трансформационных процессов в геоэкономическом пространстве Евразии с акцентом на особенности региональных интеграционных союзов и приоритеты участия в них стран Восточного партнерства. В статье сделан вывод о том, что на евразийском геоэкономическом пространстве существуют три магистральные интеграционные тенденции, которые сформированы в следующие мега-региональные экономические союзы: ЕС, ЕАЭС и ОЧЭС, а также локальный экономический союз ГУАМ. ЕС продолжает укреплять свои геостратегические позиции на континенте, Россия путем учреждения ЕАЭС сформировала свой магистральный интеграционный тренд, а ОЧЭС имеет потенциал дальнейшего развития в ближайшей перспективе. ГУАМ же в качестве локального союза функционирует на стыке вышеуказанных магистральных интеграционных союзов.

Ключевые слова: магистральные интеграционные тренды, геоэкономическое пространство Евразии, Европейский Союз, Евразийский Экономический Союз, Восточное партнерство, региональные союзы, трансформационные тенденции.